

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the above-identified patent application in view of the present amendment is respectfully requested.

This amendment amends claims 1-4 and 6-9 and adds new claims 10 and 11. The amendment to claim 1 changes the term "tapered" to "frustoconical" to more clearly set forth the structure of the present invention. This amendment raises no new issues that would require further searching, as the previous searches for tapered surfaces would have included a search for frustoconical surfaces. This amendment places the above-identified patent application in a condition for allowance.

Claim 1, as amended, patentably defines over Stroh, U.S. Patent No. 6,257,795. Claim 1 recites a second suspension member that has a through hole with first and second frustoconical surfaces that converge toward a center of the second suspension member and a cylindrical surface that is interposed between the first and second frustoconical surfaces. Claim 1 further recites a second end portion of a stud having a third frustoconical surface that is in engagement with the first frustoconical surface of the second suspension member and a fastener having a fourth frustoconical surface that is in engagement with the second frustoconical surface of the second suspension member. Stroh fails to teach or suggest these features of claim 1.

The term "frustoconical" has a specific meaning. "Frusto" comes from the term "frustum," which means "a part of

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a solid, as a cone or pyramid, between two parallel planes cutting the solid, esp. the section between the base and a plane parallel to the base." Webster's II, New College Dictionary (1999). Thus, the term "frustoconical" refers to the portion of a cone between the base and a plane parallel to the base.

Stroh fails to teach or suggest a second suspension member that has a through hole with first and second frustoconical surfaces that converge toward a center of the second suspension member and a cylindrical surface that is interposed between the first and second frustoconical surfaces. Fig. 3 of Stroh illustrates a tie rod linkage 2 having a bore 8. The bore 8 includes two recesses 13 and 14 having rounded contours. Recess 13 of Fig. 3 of Stroh receives a shoulder portion 12 of a cylindrical shank portion 10. The shoulder portion 12 has a rounded contour. (Col. 2, lines 46-54). Recess 14 of Fig. 3 of Stroh receives shoulder portion 15 of nut 11. The shoulder portion 15 also has a rounded contour. (Col. 2, lines 56-59). Fig. 3 of Stroh fails to teach or suggest the frustoconical surfaces of claim 1.

Figs. 4 and 5 of Stroh illustrate a steering linkage having a single tapered recess 17 that extends completely through the linkage. Figs. 4 and 5 of Stroh fails to teach or suggest a suspension member having a through hole with first and second frustoconical surfaces. Since Stroh fails to teach or suggest each feature of claim 1, allowance of claim 1 is respectfully requested.

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Claims 2-9 depend from claim 1 and are allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 1. Additionally, claims 2-9 are allowable for the specific limitations of each claim.

Specifically, new claim 10 recites that the first frustoconical surface and the cylindrical surface converge with one another in the through hole of the second suspension member. Claim 10 also recites that the second frustoconical surface and the cylindrical surface converge with one another in the through hole in the second suspension member. Stroh fails to teach or suggest a suspension member having a through hole with first and second frustoconical surfaces and a cylindrical surface in which the first frustoconical surface and the cylindrical surface converge with one another in the through hole and in which the second frustoconical surface and the cylindrical surface converge with one another in the through hole. Since Stroh fails to teach or suggest these features of claim 10, allowance of claim 10 is respectfully requested.

New claim 11 recites that the cylindrical surface extends from the first frustoconical surface to the second frustoconical surface so that the first and second frustoconical surfaces and the cylindrical surface entirely form the through hole in the second suspension member. Stroh also fails to teach or suggest the features of claim 11. Therefore, allowance of claim 11 is respectfully requested.

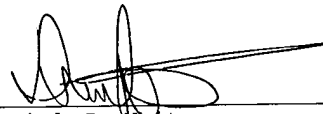
In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the above-identified patent application is in condition

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for allowance, and allowance of the above-identified patent application is respectfully requested.

Please charge any deficiency or credit any overpayment in the fees for this amendment to our Deposit Account No. 20-0090.

Respectfully submitted,



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